

Soccer Nights

Soccer Curriculum

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Overview

OVERARCHING GOAL

Introduce and reinforce the concept of play, teamwork, and exercise through the fundamentals of soccer.

INTRODUCTION TO CURRICULUM

This packet gives a daily overview of skills to focus on, drills to run, and possible games to play that reinforce the skills of the day at Soccer Nights:

- **Monday:** Passing
- **Tuesday:** Dribbling
- **Wednesday:** Controlling & Throw-ins
- **Thursday:** Defending & Finishing
- **Friday:** Scrimmages

[For 'Overview of Daily Coaching Skills & Focuses', please see Page 3](#)

Each day's section will include:

1. Drills
2. Games

[For 'Daily Drills and Games', please see Page 6.](#)

DAILY DRILL INSTRUCTIONS

Coaches should run **Drill 1** at the very minimum to ensure that players learn the fundamentals of the skill of the day – fundamentals are described on the following page. Where applicable, drills will include possible "**Progression(s)**" that coaches can use to make the drill more challenging, interesting, and/or fun.

Other than drill 1, coaches are at their discretion to run the following progressions, additional drills, and games. The games are essentially just drills that are more fun and are designed to gain or capture player interest. Use your judgment on how invested or interested your players are and run whichever drill or game makes you feel most comfortable. Be flexible!

Also, feel free to play any game any day if your kids really liked it.

Daily Coaching Skills & Focuses

DAY 1: PASSING

- 1) Form: Lock ankle, follow through
- 2) Accuracy
- 3) Pace
- 4) Timing

DAY 2: DRIBBLING

- 1) Confidence
- 2) Quick feet (close control – touch the ball every other step you take)
- 3) Use different parts of the feet
- 4) Awareness (keep your head up)

DAY 3: CONTROLLING & THROW-INS

CONTROLLING

- 1) Move your feet (be prepared)
- 2) Set up the next action

THROW-INS

- 1) Two hands
- 2) Bring ball all the way behind your head/neck
- 3) Keep both feet on the ground

DAY 4: DEFENDING & FINISHING

DEFENDING

- 1) Shuffle your feet (don't cross!)
- 2) Stay low
- 3) Stay on your toes (figuratively)

FINISHING

- 1) Lock angle ankle at about 45°
- 2) Use instep
- 3) Plant foot by side, a little behind ball
- 4) Head down (body over ball – lean forward, not back) & follow through

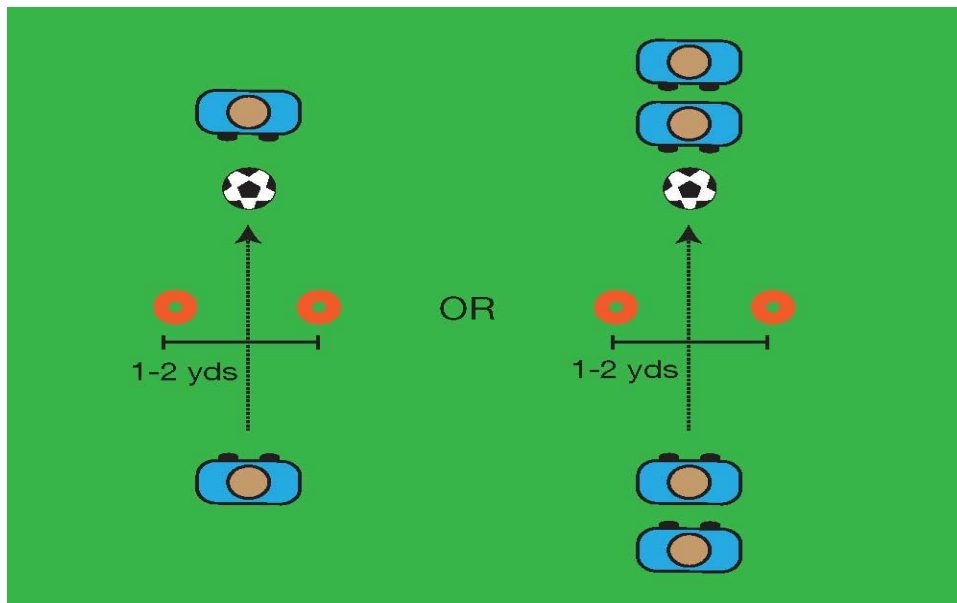
Daily Drills

DAY 1: PASSING

DRILL 1: PASSING PROGRESSION

// SET-UP

- If enough cones/balls, partner up (by skill level if possible).
- If there aren't enough cones/balls for 2 cones and one ball per pair, then have 4 people together, or have two lines and have kids go to the end of the line each time)



// DRILLS

- Simple pass to your pair

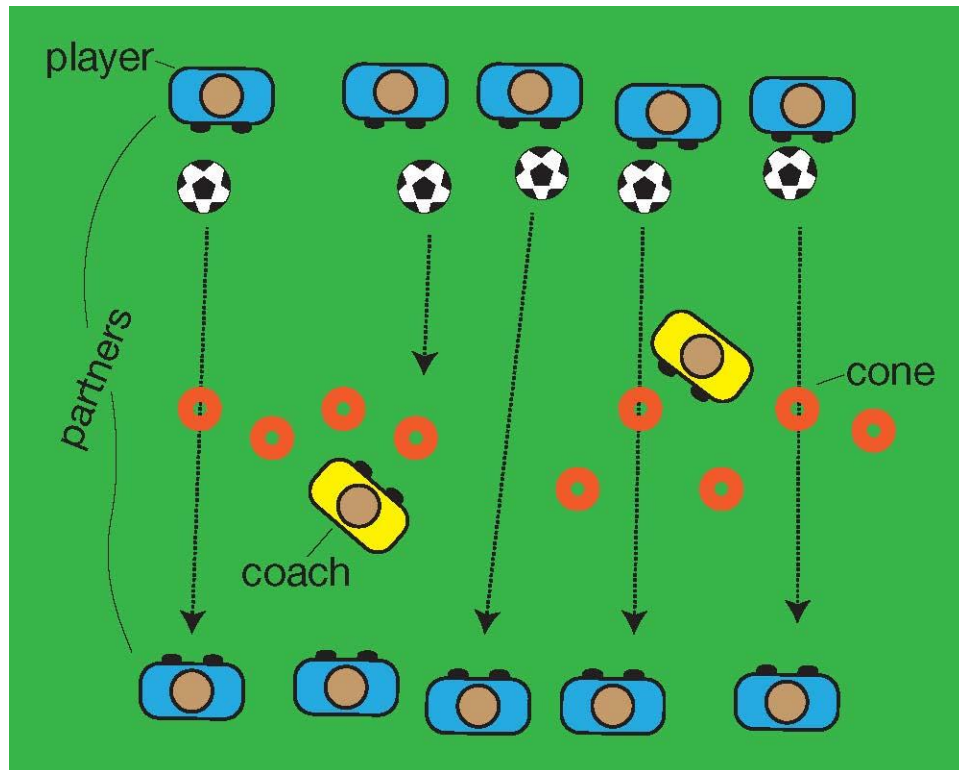
PROGRESSION:

- Back up
- Pass through cones
- Put cones closer together
- One minute only right foot, one minute only left foot
- One touch
- Spin pass: after each pass, sit down, spin around, do a star jump, do 3 jumping jacks, etc.

GAME 1: CONES VS. COACHES

// SET UP

- Put a bunch of 9" cones in an area
- Set up two lines that kids have to stand behind
- Partner players up on either side of 9" cones



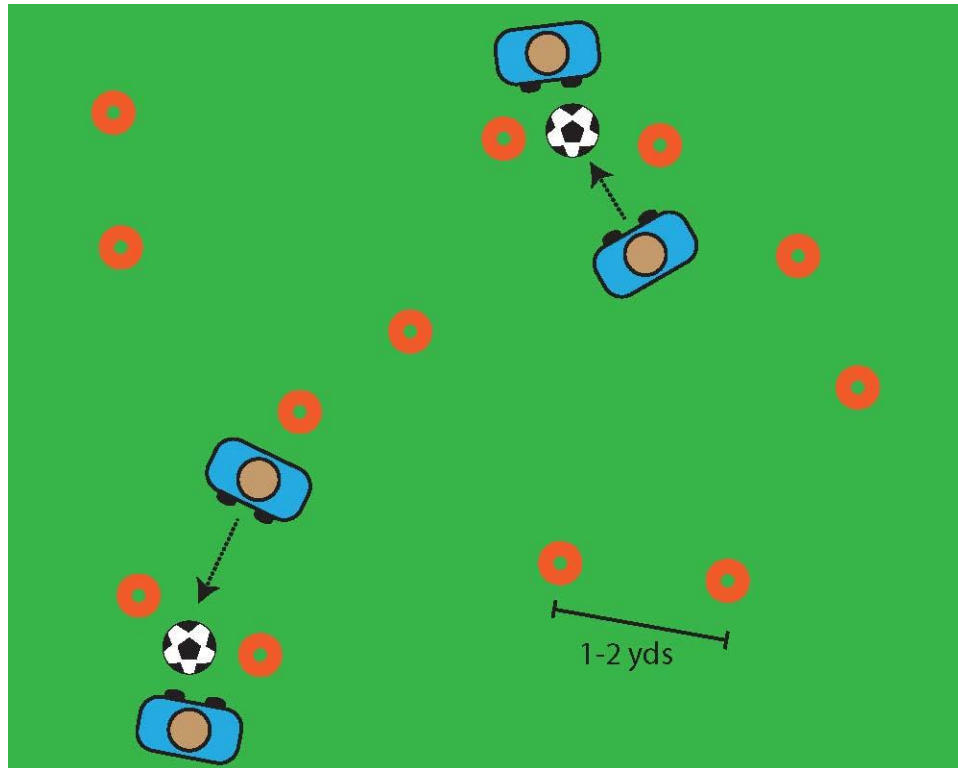
// GAME

- Kids pass to knock over 9" cones while coaches pick 9" cones up
- Time to see how long it takes kids to knock over all 9" cones

GAME 2: MULTI-GOAL SOCCER

// SET UP

- Place pairs of cones ~1.5 yards apart randomly around the field
- Partner players up



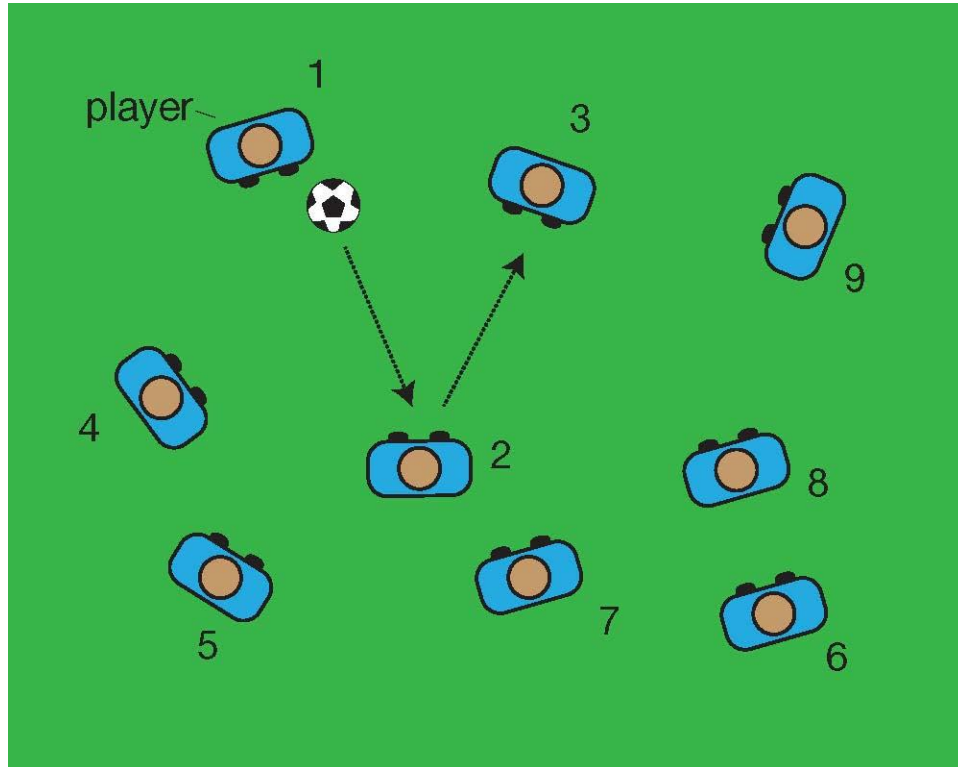
// GAME

- Players run around, completing passes to each other through the goals
- Count how many passes you can get in 1 minute
- Try to beat your last score!

GAME 3: PASSING LADDER

// SET UP

- Number players



// GAME

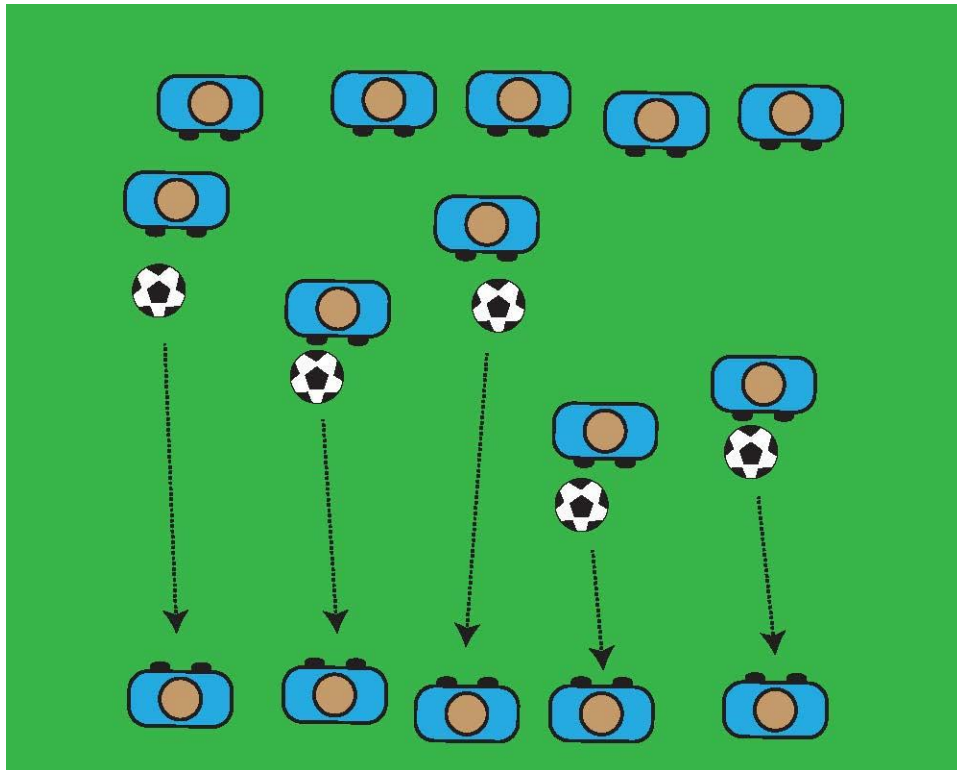
- Player 1 passes to 2, 2 to 3, etc.
- Players must keep jogging, shuffling, around the field
- Time the players, beat your time!
- **PROGRESSION:**
 - Add a ball
 - Only left foot
 - Only right foot

DAY 2: DRIBBLING

DRILL 1: LINES

// SET UP

- If enough disc cones/balls – give a ball per pair
- If not, three people – dribble back and forth
- Place disc cones at least 10 yards apart



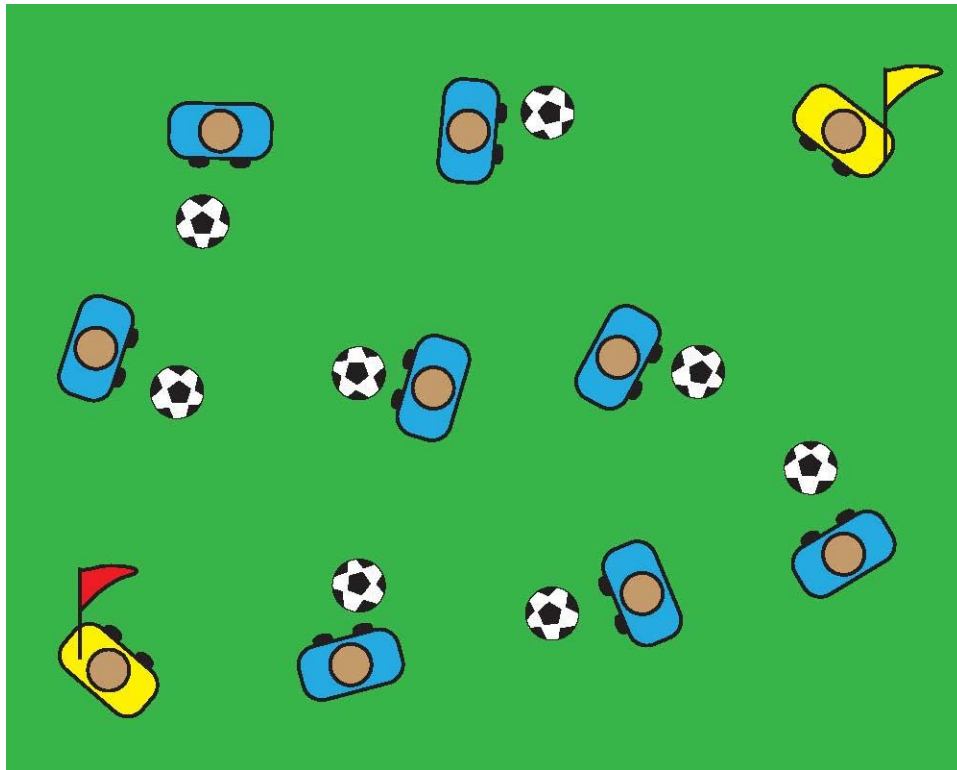
// DRILL

- Just dribble back and forth
- **PROGRESSION:**
 - Inside/outside dribbling (alternate touching inside and outside of the foot)
 - Use right foot there, left foot back
 - Backwards pull the ball (use the bottom of the foot)
 - Go forward using the bottom of the foot
 - Relay race – separate into teams, make it a game!

DRILL 2: COLORS

// SET UP

- Players dribbling around
- Coaches (or extra players) stand on opposite ends, with different color flags/t-shirts



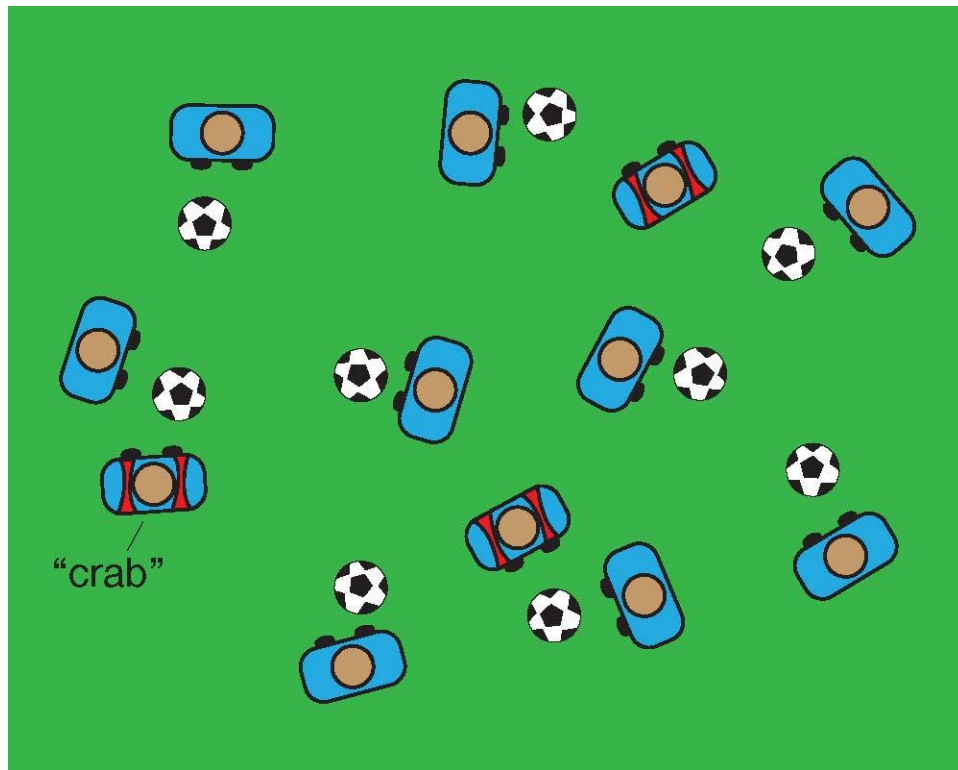
// DRILL

- Players dribble around
- Coaches with flags/t-shirts hold up flag/t-shirt randomly
- Point: keep your head up while dribbling!
- **PROGRESSION:**
 - When you hold up the red shirt, players have to sit down
 - When you hold up the yellow shirt, players have to do 3 jumping jacks
 - Do different fun things!

GAME 1: CRABS

// SET UP

- Players dribble around
- 3-4 "crabs" on back/butt, walk around on hands and feet



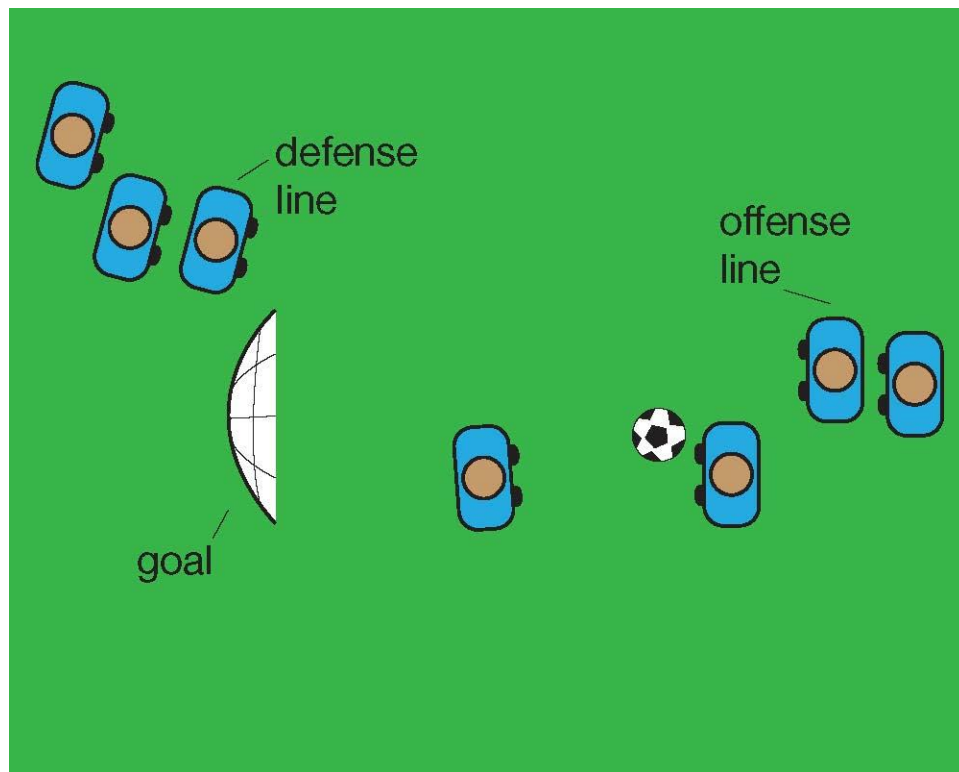
// GAME

- Players dribble around
- Crabs walk around on hands/feet to knock ball away
- **PROGRESSION:**
 - If kids are good, older – have "crabs" run around normally (sharks & minnows)
 - Give everyone a ball – knock-away ("king of the mountain")

GAME 2: 1 v. 1

// SET UP

- Half the players behind the goal
- Half the players about 10-15 yards away, facing



// GAME

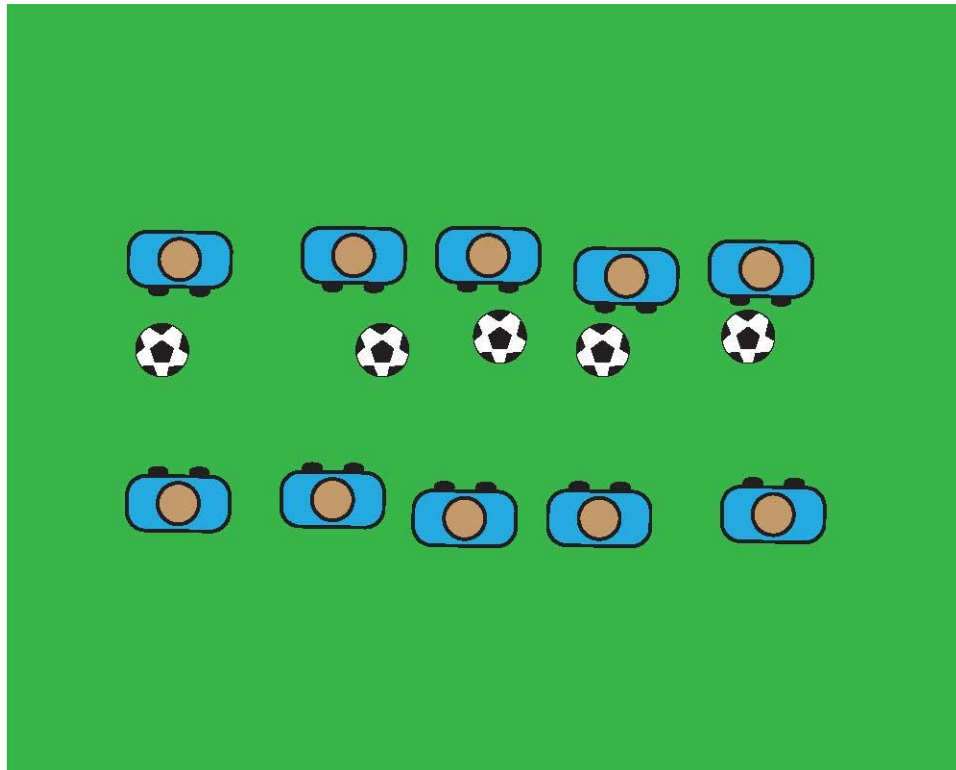
- Offense tries to score against defender
- Trade places after each round
- **PROGRESSION:**
 - Defender passes out to the attacker, runs out to defend
 - "Teams" play against each other, each player goes 3 times, how many goals can you get as a team?
 - Separate into two teams (with pennies), give each team numbers (so you'll have two people of each number). Call out a number, throw the ball. The first to the ball tries to score on the other. Mix it up by calling more than one number at a time. Call out all of the numbers at the end!

DAY 3: CONTROLLING & THROW-INS

DRILL 1: PAIR THROWS

// SET UP

- Partner players up (by skill)
- Each partner gets a ball
- Partners about 3-4 yards apart



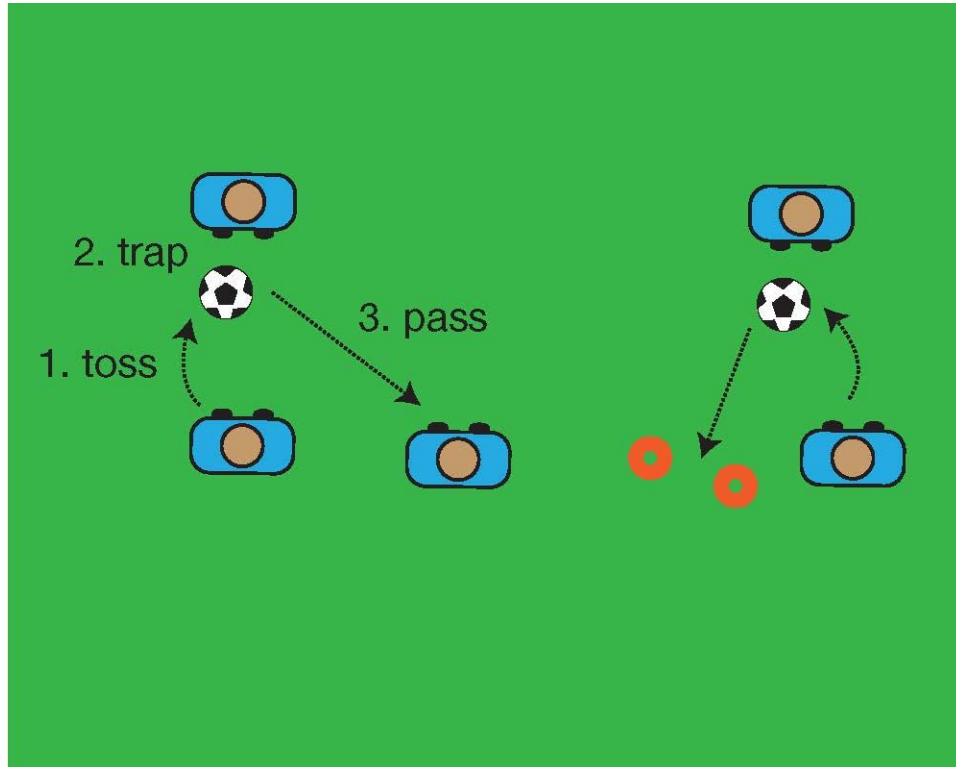
// DRILL

- Player underhand tosses the ball to the other player
1. Thigh trap
 2. Chest trap
 3. Headers (NOT IN CAMBRIDGE. ILLEGAL)
 4. Foot trap

DRILL 2: THROWS AND PASS (progression of Drill 1)

// SET UP

- Same series as DRILL 1, but pass to someone else, or dribble through cones



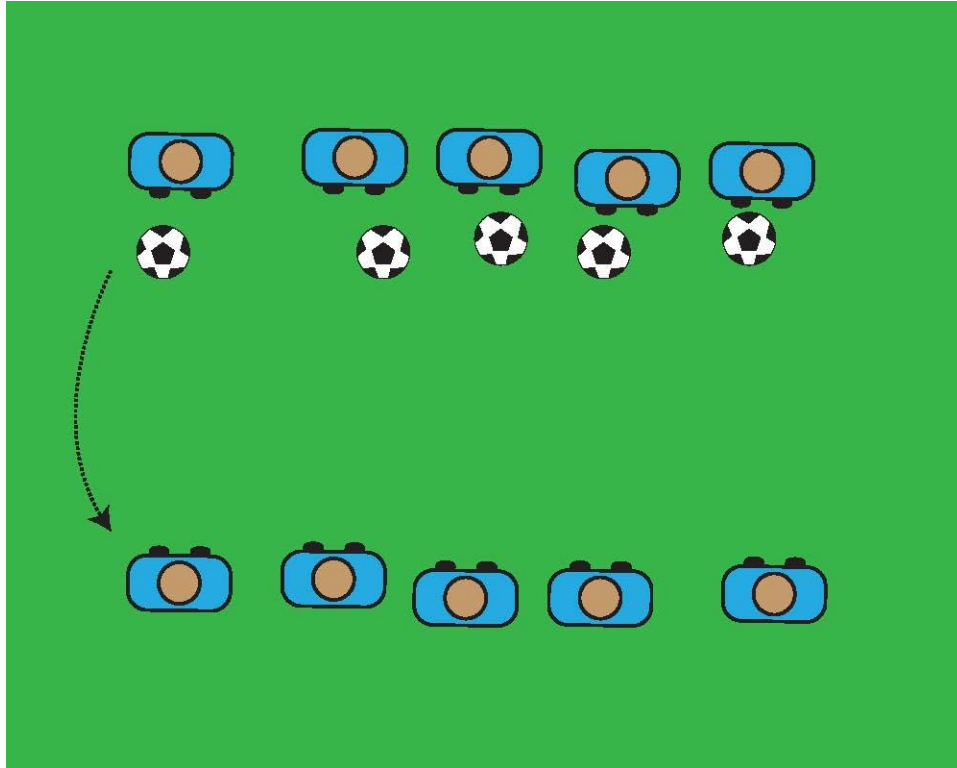
// DRILL

- Focus: Prepare your control, so you can do something with it after (pass to teammate, pass through cones)

DRILL 3: THROW INS

// SET UP

- Line players up, 5-10 yards away



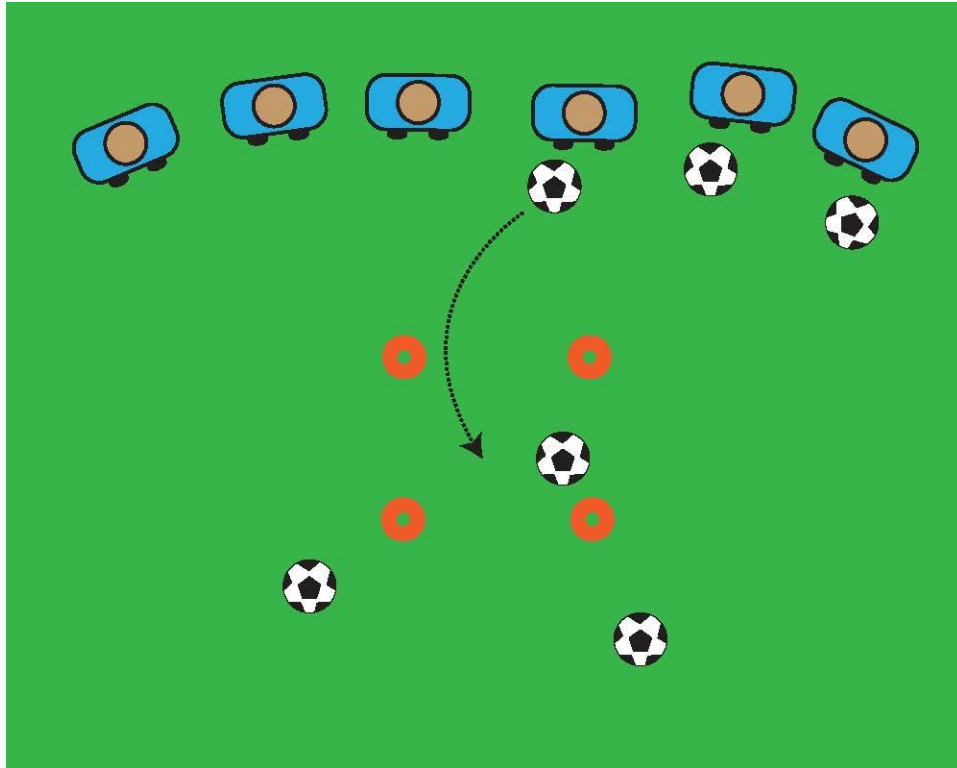
// DRILL

- Throw it in, throw back and forth
- Focus on form (use two hands, all the way behind your head)
- **PROGRESSION:**
 - Throw it in to each other, trap/control it

GAME 1: TOSS IN A BOX

// SET UP

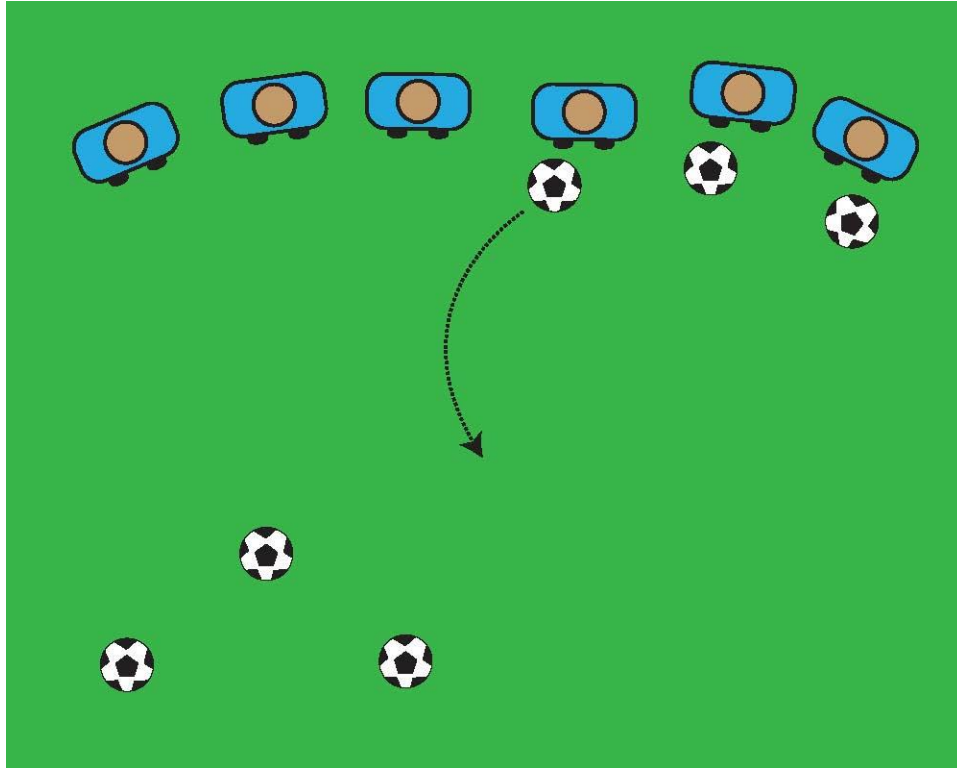
- Make a big box, have players stand 15-20 yards away
- Competition to see if players can throw ball, so that it stays in the box



GAME 2: WHO CAN THROW THE FARTHEST?

// SET UP

- Line kids up

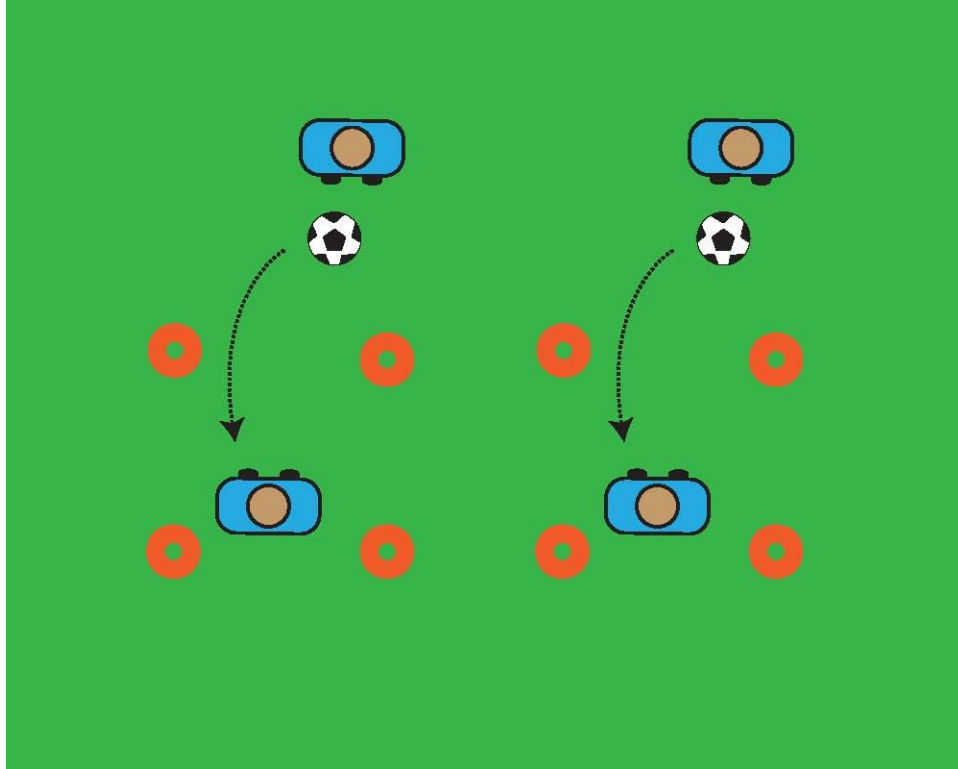


// GAME

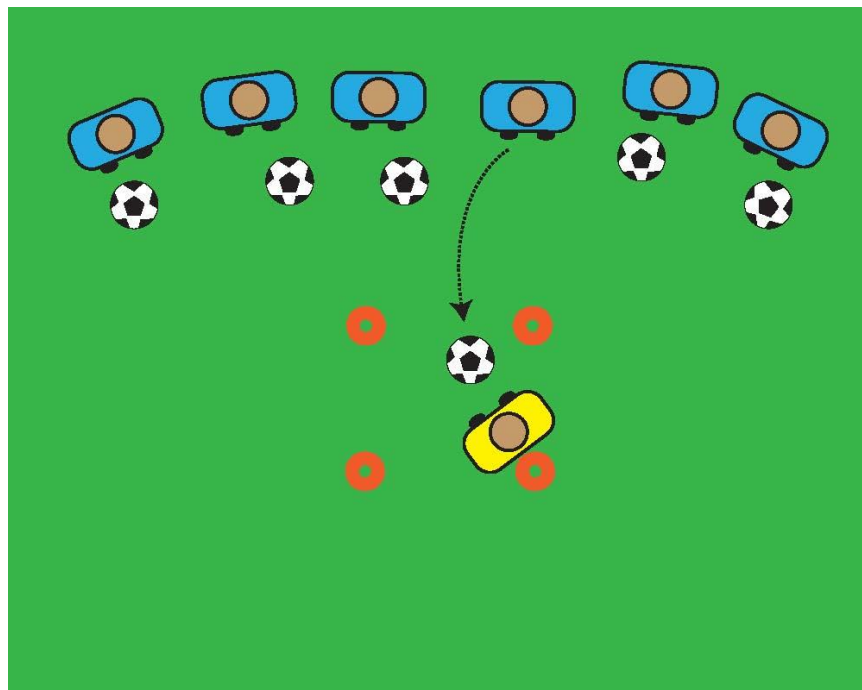
- Throw the ball as far as possible

GAME 3: TRAP IN A BOX (game for kids & game with coaches)

1. Have kids trap the ball in a box, keep making the box smaller (point: focus on control)



2. Have kids throw ball at a coach (coach competition)

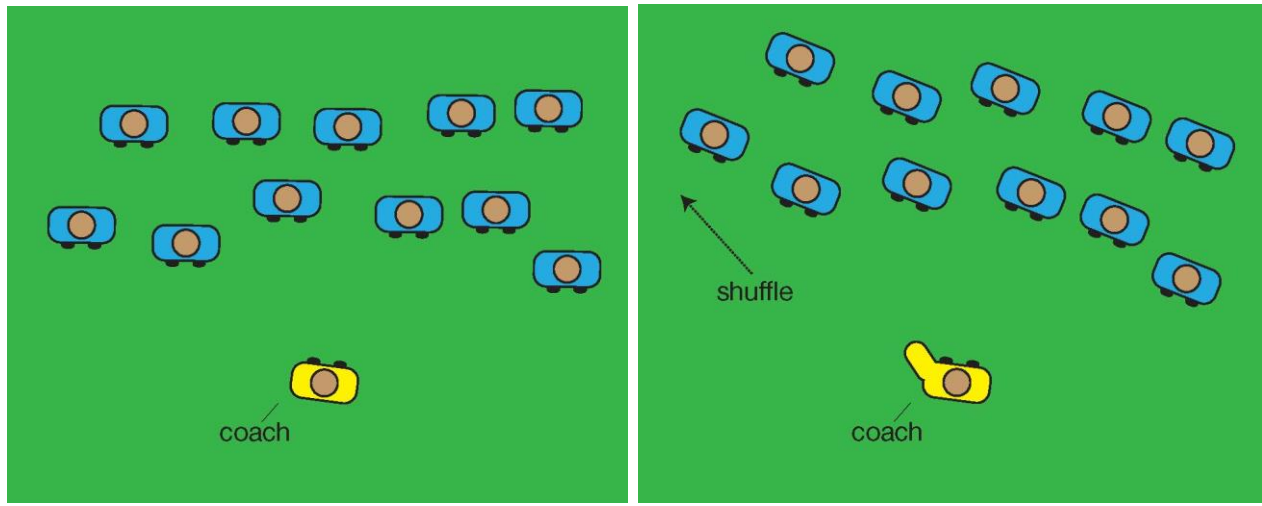


DAY 4: DEFENDING & FINISHING

DRILL 1: SHUFFLE & SLIDE

// SET UP

- Have kids line up in rows, arms length apart



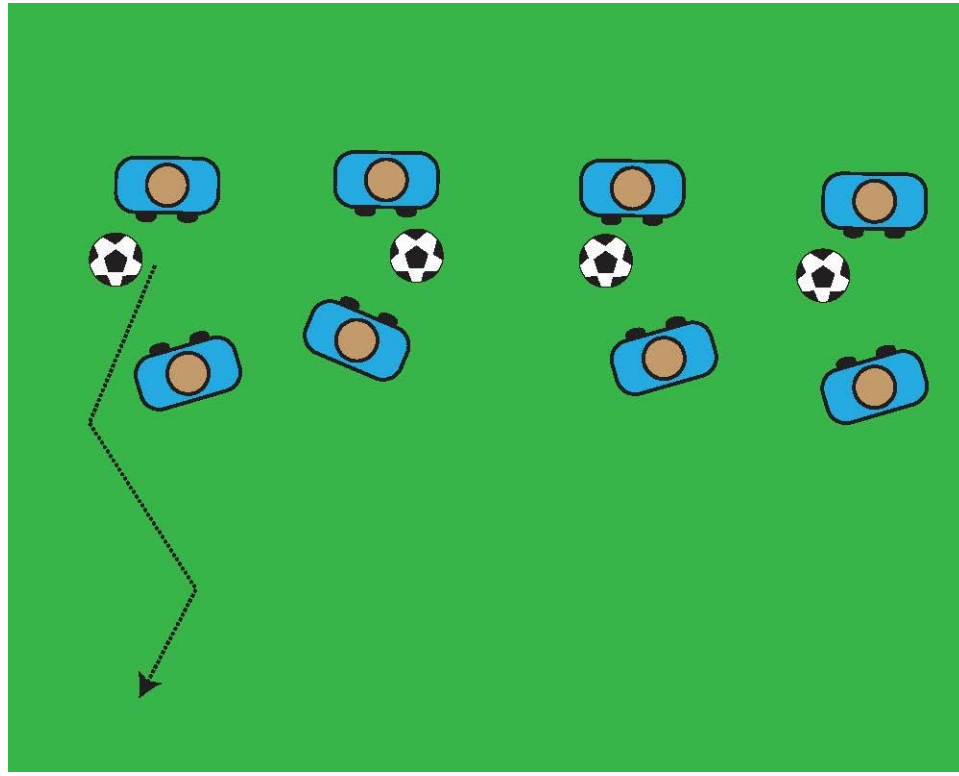
// DRILL

- Coach yells, "DEFENSE!" Players yell, "DEFENSE!" then slap ground, get in ready position (squat)
- Coach points left, kids shuffle left (and right)
- Point behind the kids left, kids drop right foot, shuffles backwards
- Mix it up! Point left, right, left back, right back, left back, etc.
- Reward good behavior: King/queen of the day before gets to run one drill!

DRILL 2: DRIBBLE & DEFEND

// SET UP

- Partner kids up (by skill, if possible)



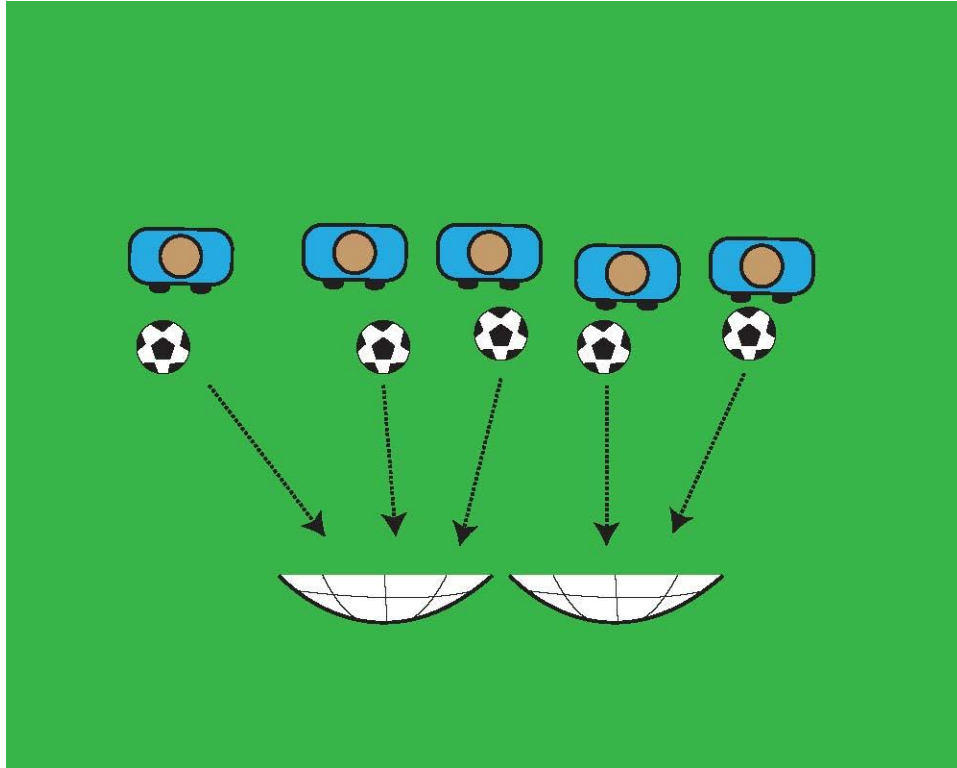
// DRILL

- Dribble in lines – zig zag, work on changing direction
- Defender plays shadow defense (don't actually try to steal the ball)
- **PROGRESSION:**
 - Go faster
 - 75% defense
 - 100% defense
 - Try to beat your player to the other line (if you steal it, try to dribble to the other side)

DRILL 3: SHOOTING DRILL

// SET UP

- Set kids up to kick into an empty net, in a line



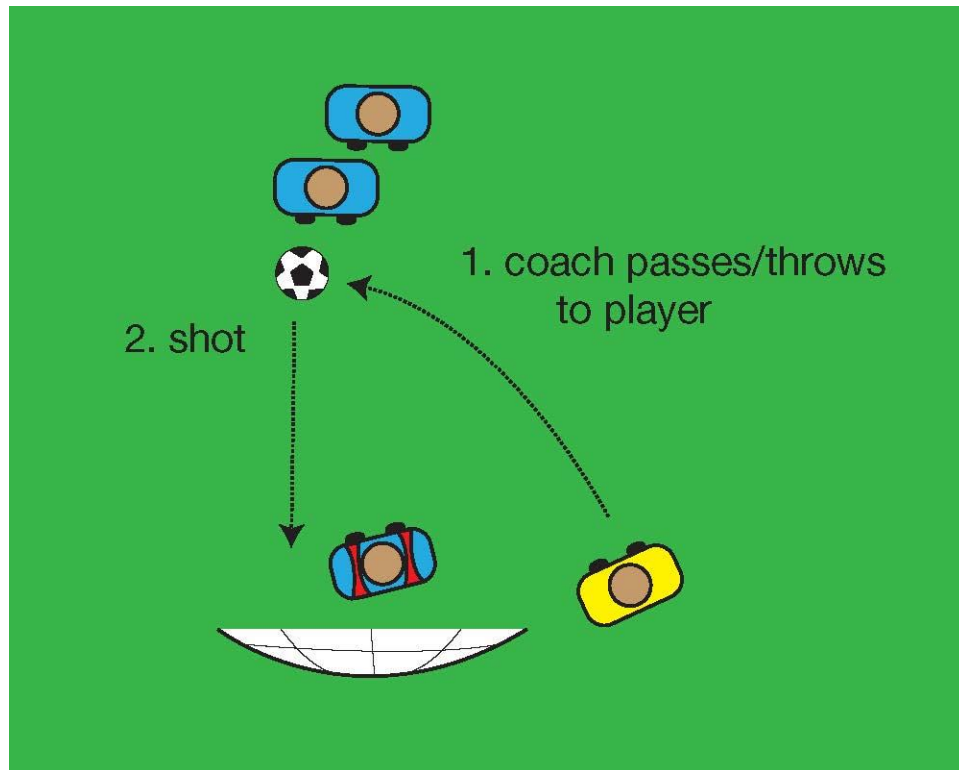
// DRILL

- Kids just shoot straight, focus on form
- Repetition is key!

DRILL 4: SHOOTING IN A LINE

// SET UP

- Players line up 10-15 yards from goal
- One goalie in goal
- Coach to the side



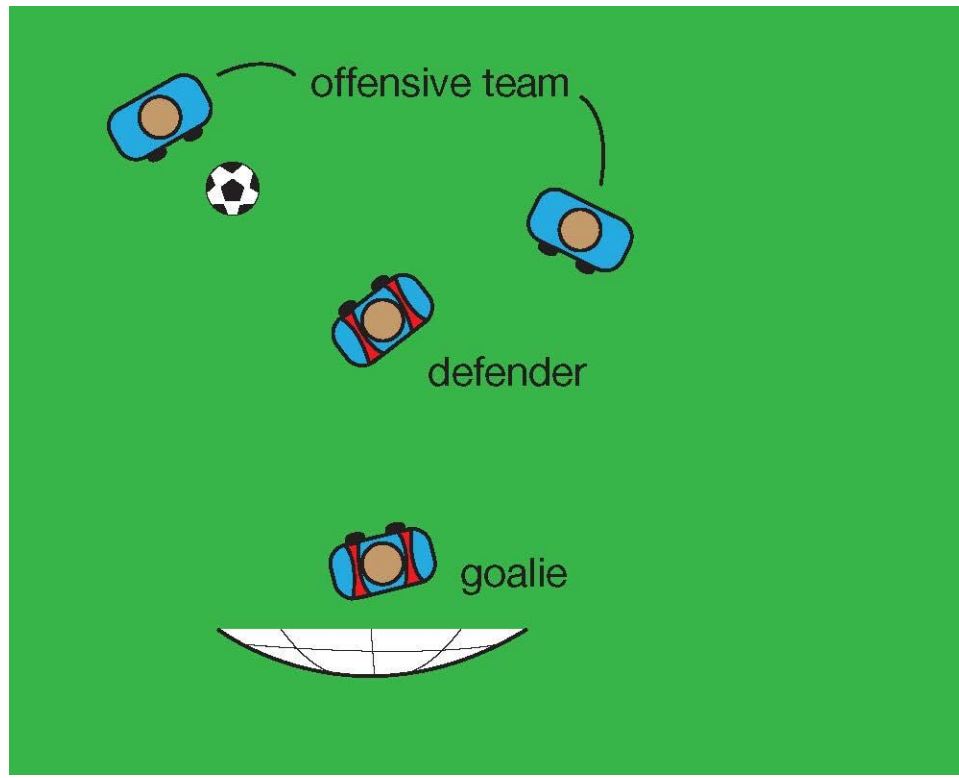
// DRILL

- Coach throws/passes ball to player
- Player controls, dribbles, shoots
- **PROGRESSION:**
 - If you make it, you become the goalie
 - Dribble 1-3 times
 - Add a defender

DRILL 5: 2 v 1

// SET UP

- Players line up 10-15 yards from goal (two lines)
- One goalie in goal (can be a coach)
- One line of defenders to goal



// GAME

- Two offensive players try to score (offense starts with ball)
- Rotate lines after each round
- **PROGRESSION:**
 - Defender passes ball out, runs out to defend (talk about defenders approach – fast and then slow)

Additional Games

1) General Warm-ups (appropriate for all age groups):

Divide players into group of no more than 10. Have each group facing each other 20 yards apart. Have each group do various warm-up exercises (skip, jog, run, side shuffle, high knees, butt kickers, karioka, bear crawl, etc.) past each other to the opposite line. They must avoid each other in the center while doing these exercises.

2) Octopus Tag (appropriate for all age groups):

Similar to an ordinary tag game. Select 8-10 players to be "IT." When one gets tagged, the player must drop to his/her knees and become an octopus (waving arms left to right). Players can be tagged by those who are IT as well as the octopi. Play until there is only one person left.

3) Cups and Cones (appropriate for all age groups):

Place disc cones scattered across a designated area (40X40). On coach's command, time how long it takes for players to turn all the CONES into CUPS (or vice versa). Divide into teams and compete for the fastest score.

4) Hot Potato (appropriate for all age groups):

Everyone sits in a large circle as close together as possible. Pass out a ball to alternating players (every other person). Everyone does a sit-up simultaneously. On the up, pass the ball to the player on the right. Everyone down together, up together, pass, and so on...

5) Human vs. Aliens (appropriate for all age groups):

Similar to Sharks and Minnows. Place all players (HUMANS) in a straight line on one end of a designated area (30X40). Have players make a scary face, and choose 8-10 players with the "scariest faces" to be the ALIENS. HUMANS must run from one side of the "galaxy" to the other without getting tagged. If and when HUMANS get tagged, they lose their "oxygen tanks" and must sit down. Play until there is only one person left. You can play with the balls or pennies as "oxygen tanks."

6) Rock, Paper, Scissors (appropriate for all age groups):

Moving randomly in a given area, perform a series of motor skills (jog, skip, karioka, side shuffle, high knees, butt kickers, bear crawl, etc.). On coach's command each person finds a partner and plays rock, paper, scissors (2 out of 3). The loser forms a train behind the winner. On coach's command, the group finds another group and the first person in line plays rock, paper, scissors with another group. The losing group adds to the end of the winner. Continue until there is only one group remaining.

7) Ameeba Weava (appropriate for all age groups):

Moving randomly in a given area, perform a series of motor skills (jog, skip, karioka, side shuffle, high knees, butt kickers, bear crawl, etc.). Give two commands - a number and description. For example, "3," "hair color." This means everyone must get in groups of three with the same hair color. Continue with different commands - birth month, favorite athlete, color shorts/pants, first letter of their name, etc.

8) Duck-duck-geese (appropriate for all age groups):

Have players sit around in a circle and designate one player to walk around tapping each player gently on the head while reciting "duck, duck..." When the player recites "goose," the player sitting down will have to get up, run, and try to tag the other player before he/she sits down in the empty spot. **For older age groups**, have the player dribble a soccer ball while walking around the circle.

9) Jurassic Park (for older age groups):

Similar to an ordinary tag game with a touch of Simon Says. Players are the humans while coaches are the dinosaurs (T-Rex, Velociraptor, Dance-a-saurus). Have the humans spread out in a designated area (40X40). In the middle of the area, place cones to create a circular area (10 yd diameter) - the dinosaur cave. Dinosaurs will pass around the egg (soccer ball). Only the dinosaur with the ball can tag the humans. If the T-Rex has the ball, players must freeze or they will be sent to the cave. If the Velociraptor has the ball, it can run around and tag anyone it chooses to send to the cave. If the Dance-a-saurus has the ball, players must copy the dance of the Dance-a-saurus. Dinosaurs will throw the ball around between them, however, if they drop the ball, players in the cave are freed!

Appendix

**Supplemental Material from
2012 Soccer Curriculum**

Additional Games per Skill

PASSING

1) Ten Pin

- **Set up a 15X20 grid (appropriate for all age groups)**

Two teams line up on either side of the grid, each player with a ball. On command, each team “pass” the ball to knock over the other teams’ cones. Once a cone is knocked over, it is removed. Team who knocks over the oppositions cones first is the winner.

Progression -

- *adjust distances depending on age of kids*
- *if using discs, place extra balls on top and knock the balls off*

2) Across the Border

- **Set up a 20X40 grid (appropriate for all age groups)**

There are two teams. Team X line up on either side of the grid with a ball each. On the coach’s whistle, Team O have 20 seconds to cross the border, avoiding the balls that are being passed at them by Team X. If any O player is hit below the waists, he is out and sits on the side and cheers for his team. As long as any one player makes it across, Team O scores a point. When the last runner from Team O is hit their turn is over. Team X then come in to “Cross the Border.” Passes must be on the ground.

3) Multi-goal Soccer

- **Set up a 30X30 grid - have players in pairs - have a number of “goals” 2 yards wide (appropriate for older age groups)**

Working in pairs, each group must pass the ball between themselves, the main objective being to ultimately pass the ball through the “goals.” A goal can be scored from any side. After scoring on one goal, the pair must then move to a different “goal.” No dribbling.

Emphasis - look for players to MOVE QUICKLY into new positions after scoring goals

Progression - How many goals scored in one minute?

DRIBBLING

1) Wickets

- **Set up a 20X20 grid (appropriate for all age groups)**

There are two teams. Divide players into 1’s and 2’s. Have all the 1’s spread around the designated area and stand with their feet spread well apart as “Wickets.” Have the 2’s dribble the ball in and through the “Wickets.” The objective is to see how many wickets they can dribble through in a given time.

Switch teams.

2) Freeze Tag

- ***Set up a 20X20 grid (appropriate for all age groups)***

Similar to the game "Wickets" combined with traditional freeze tag.

3) King of the Castle

- ***Set up a 20X20 grid (appropriate for all age groups)***

All players have a ball at their feet. On the whistle, all players are to dribble around while attempting to kick a teammates ball out of the grid. Once a ball has been knocked out of the grid, the player collects his/her ball and waits on the sideline. He/she is out for that round. That last player with a ball at his/her feet is King of the Castle.

4) Thieves

- ***Set up a 20X20 grid (appropriate for all older groups)***

Create 4 safe zones with the cones. Each player has a ball except for the 3-4 "Thieves" who will wear pennies. It's similar to a traditional tag game with safe areas. If you get tagged by the "Thieves," you lose the ball and become the "Thief." When the play is stopped, at coach's command, any player without a ball must do a "Fun Exercise" (i.e. 5 star jumps, 5 push-ups, etc.). Maximum of 2 players are allowed in each safe zone at one time. The 1st person who was in the zone must leave when the 3rd person enters the safety zone.

5) Alien attack

- ***Set up a 20X30 grid (appropriate for older age groups)***

This game is basically, the "Humans vs Aliens" warm-up with soccer balls.

CONTROLLING

1) Around the Clock

- ***Set up a 20X20 grid (appropriate for older age groups)***

Create 2 circles (one inner and one outer). Have each pair be about 5-8 yards away from each other. Work on various controlling techniques. Players in the inner circle move from receiving the ball from one person to another. Switch inner to outer and vice versa.

2) Head! Catch!

- ***Set up a 10X10 grid (appropriate for all age groups)***

Have the group form a semi-circle around the coach about 5 yards away. Round 1 = the coach tosses the ball around the semi-circle of players and says either "head" or "catch." Player must head the ball if coach says "head," and catch the ball and throw it back, if he/she says "catch." Round 2 = the players must do the opposite to the coach's instruction.

SHOOTING

1) Captain catapult

- ***Set up a 20X10 grid (appropriate for all age groups)***

Team X shoot continuously for 2 minutes. Players cannot begin their run until previous player has shot. For each goal that is scored, team X win a point. Team O must not let any ball stop behind the goal line. If so, another point is scored for team X. After two minutes, tally up points for team X then switch for team O. If the goal is large enough, the team behind the goal provides their own goalkeeper.

Progression - Adjust distances depending on age of kids.

2) Shooting numbers

- ***Set up a 20X10 grid (appropriate for older age groups)***

Divide the group in half and assign each person a number (try to match them up according to speed). Coach places a ball between the center cones and shouts out a number - or a combination of numbers - and the players in turn must sprint around the box on the outside of the markers to reach the ball first and get off a shot.

Progression - Adjust distances depending on age of kids. Feed the ball into different areas of the box.

Video Links & Coaching Points

DAY 1: PASSING

Coaching Points

- Head down and eyes on the ball
- Place non-kicking foot approx. 6 inches to the side of the ball with room for kicking foot to swing through, and toe pointed in the direction of the pass.
- Pass with the “instep” of the foot, ankle locked at right angles to the direction of the pass, knee slightly bent, contacting the middle of the ball.
- Follow through, so your teammate can see the bottom of your shoe.

Video to use as reference

<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLDD9DF02717D5214F&feature=plcp>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yOXrf0Tlphg>

DAY 2: DRIBBLING

Coaching Points

- Positive attitude – confidence
- Keep the ball close to your feet
- Head up - awareness of what’s around you
- Change of speed and change of direction

Videos to use as reference:

<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLDD9DF02717D5214F&feature=plcp>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tb8kKHJaQJQ>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6iDtaSE25Is>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bb6jIHgj7tc&feature=relmfu>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2QDqXO8g8Qs>

DAY 3: CONTROLLING & THROW-INS

CONTROLLING

Coaching Points

- Move the controlling surface into line of the flight of the ball
- Select early how you will control the ball (wedge or cushion)
- Good first touch control (protect the ball if needed)
- Make direct play possible by controlling the ball in direction of choice

THROW-INS

Coaching Points

- Hold ball between two hands (hands spread to the side of the ball)
- Take ball back so that it rests comfortably above and slightly behind the head
- Keeping feet square and ON THE GROUND, arch backwards
- RELEASING MOTION: straighten up, bring ball over the head, and release at highest point

Videos to use as reference:

<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLDD9DF02717D5214F&feature=plcp>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F6HGHfR4bYA&feature=fvsr>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e0kGbG2jOnY>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aDXqDg4k9gQ&feature=relmfu>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NfiEj1pcfnM&feature=relmfu>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oxpmr1s90dl>

DAY 4: DEFENDING & FINISHING

DEFENDING

Coaching Points

- Be aware of where other attackers are
- Challenge the player with the ball ASAP and at an angle that will cut off a forward pass
- Stay low to the ground and balanced
- Concentrate and watch the ball
- Be patient and stay on feet
- If you are further away from the ball, you may want to defend space by being goal-side of the attacker in a position where you can see both the ball and other attackers

FINISHING

Coaching Points

- Have a positive attitude
- Select type of shot (instep or laces)
- Select vulnerable part of goal (corners)
- Accuracy first; power second
- Ankle locked and toe down (for laces)
- Head down and steady
- Non-kicking foot should be well up to the ball
- Strike through the middle to top half of the ball
- Land on kicking foot
- Follow up shot for potential rebounds